

Members

Sen. Kent Adams, Chairperson
Sen. Marvin Riegsecker
Sen. Allie Craycraft
Sen. Connie Sipes
Rep. Vanessa Summers
Rep. Dennie Oxley
Rep. Robert Alderman
Rep. Cleo Duncan
Hugh Beebe
Michael Carmin
Nan Daley
Susan Hansen
Herbert Grulke
John Taylor



INDIANA COMMISSION ON AUTISM

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MEETING MINUTES¹

Meeting Date: October 24, 2003
Meeting Time: 10:00 A.M.
Meeting Place: State House, 200 W. Washington St., Room 130
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana
Meeting Number: 2

Members Present: Sen. Kent Adams, Chairperson; Rep. Vanessa Summers; Rep. Dennie Oxley; Rep. Cleo Duncan; Hugh Beebe; Michael Carmin; Susan Hansen; Herbert Grulke.

Members Absent: Sen. Marvin Riegsecker; Sen. Allie Craycraft; Sen. Connie Sipes; Rep. Robert Alderman; Nan Daley; John Taylor.

Sen. Kent Adams called the meeting to order at 10:12 A.M.

Autism Community Together (ACT)

Pamela Meissner, President of ACT, explained the purpose and mission of ACT. She

¹ Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be inspected and copied in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly homepage. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.ai.org/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

testified about the goal of using high tech solutions and collaborative methodologies to expand the quantity and quality of services to the autistic community. Ms. Meissner discussed the positive experiences she has had with her son in the education system; however, she expressed concerns about the services her son has received and the services he will receive in the future. She testified that ACT provides the following resources and contacts in the community: (1) a website containing community contacts; (2) a newsletter; (3) a DVD on early intervention; (3) a lecture series on intervention; (4) work with a local television station; (5) a parent mentoring program; and (6) grants for other programs.

In response to questions from Commission members, Ms. Meissner discussed: (1) the eight member ACT board; and (2) ACT's sources of funding.

Education and Training Requirements for Teachers in Working with Autistic Individuals

Marie Theobald, Executive Director, Professional Standards Board, distributed a presentation packet on the preparation of general education and special education teachers in Indiana.² She discussed the recent changes in preparing teachers to handle special education students in Indiana. Ms. Theobald explained that the Board has moved to a performance and standards based system, which involves an accountability model of licensing and preparation. She testified that the Board now looks for teachers to meet performance standards rather than focusing on a certain number of course credits.

In response to questions from Commission members, Ms. Theobald discussed the following: (1) credit requirements in special needs courses; (2) teachers who are required to meet the Indiana requirements; (3) consistency between the different state university course requirements; (4) requirements of early intervention courses; (5) continuing education requirements for teachers; (6) the number of teachers now licensed under the 2002 rules; (7) the lack of special needs training in the six credit hours required for license renewal; (8) funding issues; (9) school administrator training; and (10) preparing additional requirements for special needs training within existing funding and current school calendar.

Ms. Rebecca Bowman from the Department of Education (DOE) testified that Mr. Robert Marra from DOE, was ill, and therefore, unable to testify at the meeting. She stated that Mr. Marra would respond to any questions from Commission members. She also discussed the DOE's initiatives in improving teacher training.

Ms. Kathy Pratt testified on the goals in preparing professionals to work with individuals with special needs. She explained that budget concerns are the biggest issues in this area.

The Commission members discussed their concerns about the lack of training requirements for existing teachers.

Medical Reviews to Determine Eligibility for Autistic Individuals.

Pat Casanova, Director of Diversions, Office of Medicaid Policy and Planning, Family and

² Exhibit 1

Social Services Agency (FSSA), provided a handout to the Commission.³ She explained that an individual must go through the review process to be eligible for Medicaid services, and that a disability may be redetermined through progress report requirements. She informed the Commission that the focus for eligibility is not diagnosis, but instead, the quality and depth of the disability.

Commission members stated their concerns with requiring individuals with autism to have their medical status reviewed when individuals who have autism will have autism for life. Ms. Casanova indicated that Ms. Mary Ann Hack would respond to the Commission members' concerns in writing.

Other Business

Rep. Vanessa Summers discussed a non-nutritive beverage fee. She explained that she may be sponsoring legislation on a non-nutritive beverage tax this session. A preliminary draft of the non-nutritive beverage tax was distributed to the Commission members.⁴

Adjourn

Sen. Adams adjourned the meeting at 11:42 A.M.

³ Exhibit 2

⁴ Exhibit 3